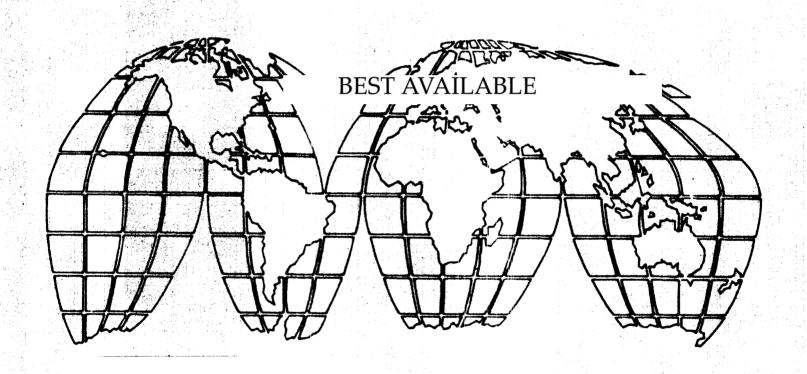AID Evaluation Occasional Paper No. 12

AN ANALYSIS OF AID PARTICIPANT TRAINING PROJECTS

BEST AVAILABLE

JUNE 1986

CENTER FOR DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION AND EVALUATION
BUREAU FOR PROGRAM AND POLICY COORDINATION

U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20523

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AID EVALUATION OCCASIONAL PAPER NO. 12

by

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and

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PREFACE

In late 1984, the Agency for International Development's (AID) Center for Development Information and Evaluation of the Bureau for Program and Policy Coordination (PPC/CDIE) undertook a literature search and limited review of evaluative documents related to the AID participant training program, including general studies, country and regional evaluations, and assessments of sector training and operational issues (e.g., selection, orientation, English language training). The resulting report and annotated bibliography have been published separately.[1]

Note: A more detailed version of this report (AID Evaluation Working Paper No. 56), containing a list of projects reviewed by region and individual project profiles, is also available from CDIE.

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[1]Annotated Bibliography of Participant Training Evaluations, Studies, and Related Reports, AID Evaluation Occasional Paper No. 8; Review of Participant Training Evaluation Studies, AID Evaluation Occasional Paper No. 11. Both are available from CDIE.

SUMMARY

This follow-on study is designed to supplement the overall participant training evaluation studies review by assessing AID's experience with various types of participant training projects. Project Appraisal Reports (PARs), Project Evaluation Summaries (PESs), and other project evaluations and audits have been reviewed to identify and classify various modes of participant training projects and to describe their respective characteristics with particular reference to comparative strengths and weaknesses. The principal audience for this review are Mission personnel responsible for participant training policies and programs, many of whom possess only limited experience in the area of participant training.

One hundred and seven projects were selected for descriptive analysis based on the availability of evaluative material and significant training activity. More than 300 evaluation reports were reviewed. A descriptive profile was prepared for each project containing information on the project purpose, type of project, type of training, strengths and weaknesses of the training element, and documents reviewed. The 107 projects were grouped into three categories within which nine different training modes were identified and described in some detail, with special attention to their respective strengths and weaknesses.

In addition to the strengths and weaknesses ascribed to the various training modes, there are a number of general issues that transcend individual modes which might be considered further by Mission personnel responsible for participant training. Listed in order of frequency of concern, the most notable issues are the following:

-- English language ability

-- Availability of candidates for training

-- Utilization of training (systems for evaluation and followup)

-- Return and retention of participants

-- Participation by women

-- Selection criteria and procedures

-- Participant placement

-- Third-country versus U.S. training

-- Program extensions and successive degrees

-- Degree equivalency

The information and findings presented in this report represent the Agency's initial attempt to define and assess the various project modes or mechanisms under which participant training is provided. The typography presented in the report seems both traditional and sound; the assessment findings (i.e., the strengths and weaknesses of each of the various "types"), on the other hand, are based on only very limited data and are, therefore, tentative and essentially illustrative. The report is thus intended to be used primarily as a "model" for similar reports in the future and as a source of broad ideas and views regarding what has and what has not worked in participant training in the past. These ideas and views should be of interest to program, project, and training planners and managers.

Our expectation is that project evaluations in the future will deal more explicitly and thoroughly than they have in the past with training projects and, particularly, with training elements of multi-input projects. Most evaluations of the latter tend to be virtually silent on both operational and impact matters related to participant training. Yet the relationship between planning and implementation matters (e.g., candidate selection, English language training, and orientation on the one hand, and time schedules, budgets, and personnel matters on the other are important and should be addressed systematically). Similarly, relationships between the project's participant training activities and progress toward or achievement/nonachievement of project objectives should be examined. To the extent feasible, the role of participant training in pursuing goals or objectives beyond those defined for the project should also be discussed.

Data generated by evaluations that treat participant training seriously and in some detail could then be aggregated or organized within the framework of this report's typography to provide more systematic information and analysis than is currently available in this area. In turn, this improved rendering of the historical record, in both operational and impact terms, could serve as an important input to field and headquarter's efforts to plan and manage a portfolio of effective training activities.

Despite limitations posed by the data, it is hoped that the identification, categorization, and description of the various approaches to training contained in this report will prove to be of value to Mission and other project personnel responsible for participant training policies and programs. Although it can be argued that training in general is a positive force, evidence of the benefits to be obtained from AID's investment in its training

program appears to be lacking. The following two recommendations suggest ways to improve the evaluation of participant training:

1. Existing project evaluation guidelines should be reviewed for the purpose of developing a more useful system or tool for assessing the participant training element on a continuing basis.

2. To permit a fuller understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of various training modes and of which mode performs better under what circumstances, a field study could be carried out in one or more countries with large training portfolios. The field study could include an analysis of such issues as contractor- versus Mission-managed training, regional versus bilateral arrangements, short-term versus long-term training, and U.S. versus third-country training.

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAI   - African-American Institute

AAU   - Association of African Universities

ADC   - African Development Council

AFGRAD   - African Graduate Fellowship Program

AID   - Agency for International Development

AIFLD   - American Institute for Free Labor Development

AMDP   - African Manpower Development Project

ASPAU   - African Scholarship Program at American Universities

CARICOM   - Caribbean Community

CDIE   - AID Center for Development Information and Evaluation

CIRES   - Ivorian Center for Economic and Social Research

CSA   - Civil Service Agency of Liberia

CSUCA   - Superior Council of Central American Universities

DIS   - AID's Development Information System database

EAC   - East African Community

FUPAC   - Federation of Private Central American Universities

IBRD   - International Bank for Reconstruction and Development

IIE   - Institute of International Education

IITA   - International Institute for Tropical Agriculture

INTERAF   - Inter-African Scholarship Program

IRRI   - International Rice Research Institute

IUCESD   - International University Center for Economic and Social
             Development

LA   - Latin America

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS (cont.)

LAC   – Latin America and the Caribbean

LASPAU   – Latin American Scholarship Program at American
            Universities

LOP   – Life of Project

MUCIA   – Midwestern Universities Consortium for International
            Assistance

OAS   – Organization of American States

OEF   – Overseas Education Fund of the League of Women Voters

OIT   – AID Office of International Training

OPEX   – Operational Executives

OYB   – Operational Year Budget

PAR   – Project Appraisal Report

PES   – Project Evaluation Summary

PPC   – AID Bureau for Program and Policy Coordination

PVO   – Private voluntary organization

ROCAP   – Regional Office for Central America Programs

RDO   – Regional Development Office

S&T/IT   – AID Bureau for Science and Technology, International
            Training Office

SECID   – South-Eastern Consortium for International Development

USAID   – AID Mission

1. INTRODUCTION

As part of an overall assessment of the Agency for International Development (AID) participant training program, the Center for Development Information and Evaluation (CDIE) in AID's Bureau for Program and Policy Coordination (PPC) recently undertook a literature review of available evaluative documents related to the participant training program. This review examined a range of evaluative studies carried out through the years on the overall training program, including general studies, country and regional evaluations, and assessments of sector training and operational areas (e.g., selection, orientation, English language training). It contains substantial historical information and current views on participant training processes and indicates the major training issues that have received attention in the past and that may still warrant attention on a country basis.

This follow-on study was undertaken to assess AID's experience with various types of participant training projects through a review of such past project evaluations as Project Appraisal Reports (PARs), Project Evaluation Summaries (PESs), and other special evaluations and audits. The purpose of this review is to identify and classify various ways or modes in which participant training has been carried out and to describe their respective characteristics, with particular reference to comparative strengths and weaknesses.

CDIE's examination of the participant training program was prompted by several considerations:

1. Present AID policy calls for a substantial expansion of participant training, with a 50-percent increase in the number of U.S. participants set for the next several years.

2. There has been little, if any, systematic analysis of participant training at the project level to serve as an information base or guide for those involved in formulating Mission training policies and designing training projects and individual programs.

3. AID has virtually no U.S. Training Officers in the field. While the participant training process is being handled to a large extent by experienced local personnel, responsibility for Mission training policies, including training expansion plans and selection of modes of training, is generally assigned to U.S. direct hire program officers and generalist project managers, most of whom possess only limited knowledge of participant training.

2. METHODOLOGY

Abstracts of more than 1,000 projects containing training elements were obtained from AID's Development Information System (DIS) project database. Of these, approximately 170 projects distributed among AID's geographic regions were selected for more intensive study. The criteria for project selection included significant training activity (at least 25 participants) and the availability of project evaluation material. More than 400 evaluative documents relating to these projects were reviewed in order to gain insight into the different approaches to training and their respective strengths and weaknesses. In addition to obtaining available evaluative materials for each project, project abstracts were reviewed for descriptions of the projects' goals, purpose, and proposed inputs and outputs.

Several of the selected projects, however, had to be eliminated after closer review of the evaluative materials revealed limited information on the project's training activities. This left 107 projects for descriptive analysis. It should also be noted that the number of evaluative documents identified for each project varied greatly, with some projects having as many as eight PARs or PESs, and others of equal duration and magnitude having only one interim evaluation listed in the database. Furthermore, in many cases, the training component of projects with numerous PARs was treated more superficially than others with perhaps only one major special evaluation. This unevenness in the number and quality of available evaluations for projects suggests that either the DIS database is far from comprehensive in this area or that project evaluation has not been carried out on a regular or systematic basis.

Because the document search was confined mainly to the DIS database, it is not known whether the findings from this study are either confirmed or contradicted by evaluations or documents not included in the system. Although this method of research does not allow for the kind of in-depth examination of issues that is possible with an exhaustive document search and field case studies, it does permit the identification of common types of training projects and patterns of experience.

Project profiles were prepared on all 107 projects selected for study using the following standard format:

-- Country and project name, number, and duration

-- Project purpose indicates whether the purpose was to strengthen or expand the pool of skilled manpower generally or to strengthen specific host government institutions or sectors through training.

-- <u>Type of project</u> indicates whether it was a training-only or a multi-input technical assistance project with a training element; whether training was general in multiple fields, sector-based, or for institution building; and whether training is implemented by a contractor or the Mission.

-- <u>Type of training</u> specifies the length, level, and location of training; that is, whether short-term specialized or long-term academic (undergraduate, graduate, or nondegree) in the United States, third countries, or in-country. The number of participants to be trained is included when available, based on the projections of the latest evaluation document.

-- <u>Strengths and weaknesses</u> of the training element or other aspects of the project affecting training that are identified in project evaluations are noted for each project profile.

-- <u>Documents reviewed</u> are cited for each project. Although many projects had only one evaluation, some had several; the average was three per project.

A separate Working Paper (No. 56) version of this report (available from CDIE) contains a list of projects reviewed by region, individual project profiles, and a bibliography of the documents reviewed for the 107 projects.

3.   SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The 107 projects treated in this study were grouped into three categories within which nine different training modes were identified. This classification does not presume to include all possible types of training but is representative of the most common types of projects for which data are available.

The categories and modes are identified briefly below and then described in detail in Section 4 of the report.

3.1   Category A: Training-Only Projects

This category consists of projects that are exclusively or predominantly related to participant training, either on a bilateral or regional basis. Regional training-only projects differ from bilateral mainly in source of funding and sponsorship, which generally are provided by the appropriate AID/Washington regional bureau.

-- <u>Mode 1: General Training (bilateral or regional)</u>. Mode
   1 projects are those that provide technical, profession-
   al, and academic training in areas not necessarily
   related to the Mission's existing project portfolio but
   important to the country's development. Candidates are
   usually employed and return to their positions after
   training.

-- <u>Mode 2: Scholarship Programs (bilateral or regional)</u>.
   Mode 2 projects are those that provide academic training
   on a competitive basis in a wide range of development-
   related areas. Candidates are often high school grad-
   uates preparing for careers and may not be employed or
   have been promised employment.

-- <u>Mode 3: Sector-Based Training (bilateral)</u>. Mode 3
   projects are those with technical, professional, and
   academic training not necessarily related to the
   Mission's project portfolio but focused on one or more
   sectors in areas important to the host country's devel-
   opment. (Regional sector-based, training-only projects
   may exist but are not represented in our sample.)

3.2 Category B: Multi-Input Projects With Training Element

This category consists of the more common technical assist-
ance projects that include participant training as an element,
generally along with components that provide U.S. advisory
assistance, supplies and equipment, and, less frequently, con-
struction. Similar to training-only projects, regional projects
differ from bilateral multi-input projects mainly in source of
funding and sponsorship, which emanate from the appropriate
AID/Washington regional bureau.

-- <u>Mode 4: Institution Building (bilateral or regional)</u>.
   Mode 4 includes multi-input projects whose purpose is to
   strengthen a specific host government institution or
   group of institutions in a particular sector.

-- <u>Mode 5: University Support (bilateral or regional)</u>.
   Mode 5 projects are multi-input projects whose purpose
   is to establish or strengthen particular university
   departments, faculties, or overall institutions of
   higher learning.

-- <u>Mode 6: Sector-Based (bilateral or regional)</u>. Mode 6
   includes multi-input projects designed to strengthen an
   entire sector or sectors in the host country.

-- <u>Mode 7: Training with OPEX Personnel (bilateral or
   regional)</u>. Mode 7 projects combine participant training

with the provision of U.S. operational executives (OPEX) personnel to temporarily fill established host government positions while personnel are being trained.

3.3 Category C: Centrally Funded Projects.

This category comprises projects that are designed, funded, and managed by the AID Bureau for Science and Technology (S&T) (and its predecessors, DSB and TAB). Such projects generally address research and development issues in developing countries which are in need of further understanding and in which U.S. institutional capabilities need development or strengthening.

-- **Mode 8: U.S.-Focused**. Mode 8 projects are centrally funded projects whose primary purpose is to strengthen U.S. institutional capability (e.g., universities) to respond to particular research and development issues in developing countries.

-- **Mode 9: Developing Country Focused**. Mode 9 includes centrally funded projects in which technical assistance is more directly provided to developing countries without the need for strengthening U.S. institutional capabilities.

Table 1 presents the distribution of the 107 different training projects by category and mode of training. (See AID Evaluation Working Paper No. 56 for specific projects reviewed by category and mode.)

The distribution of modes across regions as presented in Table 2 suggests that the Africa Bureau has most actively utilized the multi-input/bilateral institution-building mode and has tended toward regional rather than bilateral training-only projects; the Asia Bureau has placed somewhat more emphasis on the multi-input/bilateral sector-based mode; the Latin America and the Caribbean Bureau's (LAC) training activities seem to be divided among the multi-input/bilateral university support, institution building, and sector-based modes; and the Near East Bureau has focused its training projects on multi-input/bilateral institution building and university support modes and has more training-only projects than the other regions.

Multi-input bilateral projects appear to be by far the most popular, constituting 50 percent of all projects treated in this sample. Also of note is that institution-building projects do not appear to use a training-only approach and that scholarship programs tend to be regionally based.

Table 1. Distribution of Training Projects by Category and Mode

Category and Mode	No. of Projects
A. Training Only (bilateral and regional)	
1. General Training	17
2. Scholarship Programs	8
3. Sector-Based Training	5
Subtotal	30
B. Multi-Input Projects with Training Element (bilateral and regional)	
4. Institution Building	27
5. University Support	16
6. Sector-Based	15
7. Training with OPEX	5
Subtotal	63
C. Centrally Funded Projects	
8. US-Focused	7
9. Developing Country-Focused	7
Subtotal	14
Total	107

4. EVALUATIVE SUMMARY OF TRAINING MODES

The following section presents more detailed descriptions of the training project categories and modes, including summaries of their more notable strengths and weaknesses as reported in past evaluations.

4.1 Category A: Training-Only Projects (Bilateral and Regional)

Category A includes projects that are exclusively participant training and are programmed and funded at either the Mission or regional level. Training in this category includes general professional and technical training, sector-based

Table 2. Project Distribution by Geographical Area

Category/Mode	Africa	Asia	LAC	NE	Global	Total
A. Training Only (bilateral)						
1. General Training	–	4	3	6	–	13
2. Scholarship Program	–	–	–	1	–	1
3. Sector-based	–	2	2	1	–	5
A. Training Only (regional)						
1. General Training	3	–	1	–	–	4
2. Scholarship Program	3	1	2	1	–	7
B. Multi-Input (bilateral)						
3. Institution Building	11	5	4	5	–	25
4. University Support	3	4	4	4	–	15
5. Sector-Based	1	7	4	1	–	13
6. Training With OPEX	4	–	–	–	–	4
B. Multi-Input (regional)						
3. Institution Building	1	–	1	–	–	2
4. University Support	–	–	1	–	–	1
5. Sector-Based	–	–	2	–	–	2
6. Training With OPEX	1	–	–	–	–	1
C. Centrally Funded Projects						
7. U.S.-Focused	–	–	–	–	7	7
8. Developing Country-Focused	–	–	–	–	7	7
Total	27	23	24	19	14	107

Note: LAC is Latin America and the Caribbean; NE is Near East.

training, and scholarship programs. Training-only projects provide short- and long-term training in key development areas to host country leaders, mid-level managers, specialists and technicians, and students. Training supports major AID objectives and aims to alleviate human resource constraints. Individuals targeted for training generally hold jobs to which they can return or are assured employment upon return, although scholarship programs are less rigid on this point. Training-only projects allow quick response to requests for training support needs that were unanticipated or that otherwise would be difficult to fulfill.

4.1.1 Mode 1: General Training

Purpose. The purpose of Mode 1 projects is to strengthen the country's human resources base as a whole in areas of development priority to the host country and the Mission. General training projects are used for pre- and post-project training and for training needs not filled by existing Mission projects. Specific targets for training may be designated (e.g., mid- to high-level managers and planners in host government institutions), or broader objectives may be proposed (e.g., upgrading professional, technical, and managerial skills in the public and private sectors).

Type of Training. Mode 1 projects entail short-term specialized and long-term academic training at all levels (undergraduate and graduate, although mostly the latter) in the United States and third countries. In-country training may also be provided. Most short-term training is of a specialized and technical nature and may include short courses, observation and on-the-job training, and specially tailored programs.

Mode of Implementation. Bilateral Mode 1 projects are generally managed directly by the Mission, but sometimes the training component is handled by contractors. Regional training is usually funded and managed by the relevant AID/Washington regional bureau, with active assistance by the Mission in implementing the country allocation.

Strengths. Mode 1 projects tend to be highly popular because of their flexibility and versatility in providing training outside the Mission's project portfolio. The greatest value of this kind of project seems to be its ability to respond quickly to special host government requests and unexpected opportunities, as well as to experiment with new approaches. This mode can provide "head start" training for future projects and fill important training needs that might not otherwise be met. Consequently, host governments tend to be closely involved with and committed to this type of project, which augers well for its

success, particularly in the likelihood of a high return rate and participant utilization of newly acquired skills and knowledge.

Weaknesses. When host governments have not first carried out manpower needs assessments or set training priorities, training design tends to lack focus. Without a national training committee or manpower planning strategy, the relationship between participant selection and training needs may be weak and the distribution of training opportunities may be uneven among the different host government ministries and departments, with preference not necessarily given to the highest priority needs.

When English language abilities or participant qualifications are inadequate, programs tend to be prolonged and extended. If training is planned annually, cost overruns and mortgages on subsequent-year training funds may result from such program extensions. Numerous evaluations recommended that training be funded at the outset for the duration of a participant's program to avoid such cost overruns.

Most of the projects reviewed in this category noted inadequate followup and evaluation efforts, making it difficult to assess effectiveness, appropriateness, and impact of training.

Short advance notice was frequently noted as a problem in Mode 1 projects, especially for academic participants. Document processing delays by host government supervisors and in AID/Washington and U.S. universities, in conjunction with other delays, frequently led to the need to truncate predeparture orientation and other preparation activities. It was suggested that more complete screening might reduce processing time.

Although third-country training is integral to many training-only projects, the lack of mechanisms for managing such training was frequently noted as a constraint to the use of this alternative to U.S. training.

Project management can be problematic in regional general training projects if the lines of authority are not clearly designated and if preference is not clearly given to field management over AID/Washington responsibility.

Degree equivalency was noted as a problem for many general training projects, especially in Francophone Africa.

4.1.2 Mode 2: Scholarship Programs

Purpose. The purpose of Mode 2 projects is to expand and strengthen, on a country or regional basis, the pool of trained manpower in development-related areas through academic scholar-

ships awarded on merit. Candidates generally are students or graduates not yet on a career track in the public or private sector.

Type of Training. Mode 2 projects include academic training at all degree levels (mostly graduate but occasionally nondegree) in the United States and third countries.

Mode of Implementation. Scholarship programs are managed mainly through contractors. (Most of the projects reviewed in this category are regionally sponsored.)

Strengths. Scholarship programs provide an effective way to sponsor for academic training large numbers of host country nationals who are not already tied to a specific job or institution.

Third-country scholarships often are more cost-effective than U.S. training and often have a better return rate because incentives to remain in third countries with socioeconomic conditions similar to the home country usually are not very compelling. Training also is likely to be more relevant to the home country situation.

Scholarships to U.S. institutions also can be cost effective if arrangements are made for tuition waivers and if international travel expenses are met by the host government, as was the case in some projects.

Weaknesses. This project mode tends to be unfocused and to lack established training priorities. Application of knowledge and skills after return is more problematic than in most other modes because participants generally are not tied to particular institutions and are generally younger persons who may be less committed to serving in relevant host country positions.

Like general regional training projects, regional scholarship programs can be difficult to monitor from AID/Washington and generally tend to entail logistical problems. In many instances, a closer relationship is needed between the contractor and the AID Mission in order to coordinate AID policy and priorities with in-country priorities.

Some countries do not need access to a separate regional scholarship program if they already have bilateral general training projects. Although scholarship recipients may be highly influential in the long run, they generally are few in number and scattered among various fields of training.

Successive degrees have occasionally been a problem for this kind of project. When U.S. universities and training institutions encourage the pursuit of further training without heeding

the original training objectives, unanticipated program delays and extensions may result. Nondegree scholarship participants are most likely to encounter this situation as they become frustrated with their status and attempt to prolong their training program in order to finish degree requirements.

4.1.3 Mode 3: Sector-Based Training

Purpose. The purpose of Mode 3 projects is to train a cadre of people and upgrade their technical, managerial, or professional skills in a particular discipline or set of disciplines (e.g., development planning, educational technology, legal education, management) so that they can assist in the development of a host country sector(s) such as agriculture, education, or private enterprise.

Type of Training. Mode 3 projects entail short-term specialized or long-term academic (undergraduate or graduate) training in the United States or third countries. In-country workshops may also be provided.

Mode of Implementation. Training can be planned and implemented either directly by the Mission or through a contractor.

Strengths. A major strength of Mode 3 over the general training mode is that the sector approach generally seems to be based on a more defined assessment of sector manpower needs and training gaps. Consequently, training is more likely to focus on priority areas, and the likelihood that returned participants will have the opportunity to utilize their newly acquired skills and knowledge is enhanced.

Sector-focused training also provides a greater opportunity for developing critical masses of qualified personnel in particular areas than does the less focused general training approach.

Weaknesses. Although less of a problem than in the general training mode, lack of sufficient host government manpower planning capabilities or interest to effectively determine training requirements at the sector level sometimes results in vague training objectives.

4.2 Category B: Multi-Input Projects With Training Element

Category B includes the more traditional AID technical assistance projects in which a training component is built in to support project objectives. Generally, these projects provide

U.S. advisory assistance, equipment and supplies, and, in some cases, construction (e.g., housing for U.S. technicians, training facilities). Projects of this kind constitute the majority of AID activity and generally attempt to build institutional or sector-wide capabilities within the host country. They are planned and managed by AID Missions, generally with active host government and U.S. contractor involvement. For project-related training, the following considerations are important: (1) that the host institution have the type and number of employees projected in the project design to receive training and (2) that the timing and duration of training be integrated into and coordinated with other project components.

The modes identified in this category include training for institution building, training in support of university development, sector-based training, and training in combination with in-country OPEX personnel. Each of these modes has a regional variation.

4.2.1 Mode 4: Institution Building

Purpose. The purpose of Mode 4 projects is to assist developing country institutions to develop viable, sustainable organizations that eventually can function without external donor support. Projects in this mode often relate to departments within host government ministries (e.g., agricultural research or extension service, the educational planning unit, family planning program).

Type of Training. Mode 4 projects entail short-term specialized training (study tours, specialized courses, observation, and on-the-job training) and long-term academic training (mostly graduate) in the United States and third countries. Regional and in-country seminars and on-the-job training often supplement participant training in this mode.

Mode of Implementation. Although this type of project is generally contractor managed, training is either handled under the contract or managed directly by the Mission in close coordination with the contractor. Regional projects in this mode are usually managed through AID's regional field offices or AID/Washington's geographic bureaus but implemented in the field by the Mission or contractor.

Strengths. The relevance and appropriateness of U.S. training was often judged to be excellent, and candidates were reported to be well qualified in many cases. Evaluations of some projects noted that the training element was effectively timed and integrated with other project elements, allowing participants to return home to work with U.S. technicians.

Participant return rates, utilization of training after return, and commitment of the host government participating institution and U.S. contractors to project goals were reported on positively in many of the project evaluations reviewed in this mode. Better selection and higher return rates and utilization are most likely when ties with host government institutions are strong.

Several evaluations of projects with training components designed to strengthen regional institutions reported that progress was made toward better regional cooperation and understanding.

Weaknesses. Many of these projects encountered difficulties when host government institutions were unable or unwilling to release senior-level and mid-level personnel to attend training programs. This resulted in the selection of junior-level participants, which can affect the degree of training utilization: when training involved techniques and procedures unfamiliar to their superiors, junior returnees with little influence have tended to have difficulty in introducing new ideas and effecting changes.

Project reports detailed several types of selection problems, including limited availability of candidates in particular sectors and with adequate language skills, inadequate incentives to apply for training opportunities, and improper selection procedures such as the designation of candidates without consulting them. Selection difficulties in regional projects included lack of standard criteria. Some evaluations suggested that host countries submit more candidates than the number of slots available to allow graded selection and reduce the number of unqualified participants.

Some projects in Mode 4 delayed implementing participant training because of host government financial, management, or human resources constraints; as a result, participants did not return in time to join U.S. technicians who were in-country to work with them.

Many projects reported unsatisfactory return rates due primarily to noncompetitive salaries in sponsoring institutions, lack of local institutional interest in or support for returnees' ideas, and better opportunities abroad or in other fields at home.

The vast areas and large number of countries involved in regional institution-building projects make logistical problems likely. Communication between project management and participating regional institutions and country training officers is difficult, and such logistical problems often mean that participants are given short notice and do not have time to receive adequate predeparture orientation.

4.2.2 Mode 5: University Support

Purpose. The purpose of projects designated Mode 5 is to develop the capability of host country universities or specific faculties to respond more effectively to the country's needs, especially in meeting national development goals.

Type of Training. Mode 5 projects entail long-term academic training at all graduate and undergraduate degree levels, generally in the United States. Short-term training in the United States and third countries often supplements the long-term academic programs.

Mode of Implementation. These projects are often implemented through contracts with U.S. universities or consortia. Training is integral to these projects and is managed directly by the Mission or, more often, by the contractor.

Strengths. Repatriation rates and utilization of training often were very good, reaching as high as 90 percent in many cases. Many evaluations attributed this to close coordination and long-term commitment among all the parties involved--the host government, local and U.S. universities, and AID Missions.

Selection criteria and procedures were noted to be effective, resulting in the selection of highly qualified and motivated candidates with generally adequate English language abilities.

Weaknesses. In some cases, fewer candidates were available for training than anticipated. Reasons for this included English language problems, heavy teaching workloads for existing faculty, and competition with other donor projects.

Ph.D.-level participants often required more time to complete dissertations than anticipated, leaving U.S. technicians to work in host government institutions without counterparts.

Some returned participants did not want to teach at the university or assume similar positions because of better pay in other jobs or in other countries, lack of promotion opportunities, inadequate institutional support for research, and similar factors. In some cases, the training program did not produce enough trained personnel to have a significant impact on the home country university. Degree equivalency was sometimes a problem, especially in Francophone countries--a problem not unique to this mode.

The regional project examined in this mode reportedly did not achieve its objective of improving regional inter-university coordination because of lack of commitment by the participating universities.

4.2.3 Mode 6: Sector-Focused Training

Purpose. The purpose of Mode 6 projects is to assist in improving the quality and increasing the quantity of human resources in one or more host country sectors on a bilateral or regional basis. Such projects involve more than one or even several institutions and generally provide assistance to an entire sector such as agriculture and rural development, education, public health, science and technology, or the private sector. Projects might also address the country's human resources needs in one or more disciplines such as agricultural economics or environmental concerns. Participants in such projects expect to return to productive work in the selected discipline but not necessarily to one predesignated host country institution.

Type of Training. Mode 6 projects entail short-term specialized and long-term academic (mostly at the graduate level) training in the United States and third countries. In-country seminars and workshops often supplement this training.

Mode of Implementation. Bilateral projects in Mode 6 are generally managed by contractors, but the participant training element is often implemented directly by the Mission in close coordination with the contractor. Regional projects are managed from the regional bureaus in AID/Washington but are implemented in the field by the Mission or contractor.

Strengths. Insufficient evaluative data were available to judge the strength of this mode; however, as in training-only projects, sector-focused training seems to have provided a good opportunity for developing critical masses of skilled manpower. Evaluations of some projects in this mode reported positively on return and utilization rates and attributed this to good planning, management, and followup.

Weaknesses. Some multi-input projects in this mode experienced delays in implementing the training component because of difficulties in locating suitable candidates and late arrival of U.S. project technicians. Other projects suffered from poor selection criteria and procedures (e.g., candidates not consulted before their selection) and lack of lead time for an orderly selection process, resulting in inadequate orientation and health screening. Participant placement in some instances was limited to the contractors' home campuses, which narrowed the range of available training institutions.

Return and utilization rates were low in some instances because of unclear training objectives, lack of incentives for accepting available positions within the project, better opportunities outside the project, and poor followup in general.

4.2.4 Mode 7: Training With OPEX Personnel

Purpose. The purpose of Mode 7 projects is to increase the supply of trained manpower in the public sector in order to strengthen the host government's institutional capability to meet its development needs. Operational executives (OPEX) personnel are assigned to replace participants in their established host government positions for the duration of the participants' training.

Type of Training. Short-term specialized and long-term academic training (undergraduate, graduate, and certificate-level) are provided in the United States and third countries. In-country or regional workshops and seminars frequently supplement participant training.

Mode of Implementation. Project and training are managed by contractor. (The projects reviewed in this mode included the regional Southern Africa Manpower Development project which had bilateral projects for Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland.)

Strengths. Projects in this mode are generally flexible and contribute positively to host government long-term objectives to strengthen institutional capacity to support development goals. Replacing OPEX personnel with returned participants has generally proved successful in promoting institutional development.

This type of project is most successful when the host government identifies priority needs for technical assistance and has projected its manpower requirements. The use of OPEX personnel has been an effective method for temporarily meeting certain critical manpower shortages while indigenous personnel are being trained to meet the country's manpower requirements.

Weaknesses. When OPEX personnel are not placed in established host government positions, there are no identified counterpart personnel available for training. Even when properly placed, OPEX personnel are host government employees and do not function within the framework of the typical U.S. technical assistance project with its specified goals, purposes, and targets. Consequently, the training element under such projects may be less carefully planned and coordinated than desirable.

In the projects reviewed, evaluations suggested that resources would have been better utilized had the project design included provision for assisting the host government in developing training plans and priorities.

4.3 Category C: Centrally Funded Projects

Most of the 14 projects reviewed in this category were
designed and managed by the Bureau for Science and Technology
(S&T) or its predecessors (DSB or TAB). Centrally funded proj-
ects generally have the following characteristics:

-- Their overall purpose is to develop institutional capa-
   bilities of developing country institutions and U.S.
   organizations (predominantly universities) to respond to
   priority development needs.

-- The subject matter is generally of global importance and
   applicability and tends to be somewhat esoteric, requir-
   ing state-of-the-art development.

-- Such areas as alternative energy resources, environmen-
   tal control, educational technology, development plan-
   ning and administration, communication technology, popu-
   lation and family planning issues, and developing
   country export development and promotion are illustra-
   tive of project focus.

The projects are designed to develop the institutional capa-
bility of the targeted U.S. or developing country organizations
so that they can maintain themselves without the need for central
support; that is, by becoming self-sustaining or by receiving
funding from the USAID Mission, the host country, or AID regional
bureaus.

For the most part, training included in these projects is
not an end in itself, but a means of achieving the projects'
objective: attainment by the targeted U.S. or developing country
organization of the institutional capability to respond to devel-
opment issues. Funds for participant training are generally
built into the project, but Missions and host countries are
expected to contribute financially, frequently by covering inter-
national travel costs and sometimes the living allowances of par-
ticipants.

Centrally funded training ranges from Ph.D. programs to
1-week in-country workshops. The norm tends to be a workshop of
several weeks' duration dealing with global or regionally
tailored issues at an introductory, intermediate, or state-of-
the-art level.

Nearly all these projects are managed by the grantee or
collaborating U.S. institutions, many of which started under the
211(d) institutional grant program of the early 1970s. Bureau
for Science and Technology (DSB and TAB) involvement is fairly
substantial inasmuch as S&T officers serve as project managers.

The projects tend to be independent of the Missions, whose involvement varies from moderate to nonexistent. Indeed, in some cases, projects operate in non-AID or graduate countries. Correspondence often is directed by the central AID/Washington office or contractor to host country individuals. Although announcements on training opportunities are generally circulated to the Missions, contractors often select countries, institutions, and individuals for training programs themselves instead of using regular Mission or host government channels. Missions can take advantage of available programs even when the subject matter is not directly project-related or dealt with in the Country Development Strategy Statement (CDSS). (Information on the availability of such training opportunities can be obtained through S&T/Office of International Training.)

It is difficult to get an accurate view of participant training in this category by reviewing PARs, PESs, and other evaluation documents, partly because the training element is often more a means than an objective in itself. Centrally funded projects have been separated into two modes: those whose primary purpose is to build up U.S. institutional capability to deal more effectively with special development problems, and those whose primary purpose is more directly related to assisting developing country institutions to respond to problems.

4.3.1 Mode 8: U.S.-Focused

Purpose. The purpose of these projects is to strengthen the capability of a U.S. institution (e.g., university, research institute, or consortium of institutions) to respond to high priority development needs in one or more areas of science and technology in developing countries.

Type of Project. Projects in this mode generally provide grants or contracts to U.S. institutions to enable them to develop the capacity to deal with special development issues of concern to developing countries. Some examples of issues considered important by AID and in need of priority attention are alternative energy sources, establishing agricultural research priorities, and development communications.

Type of Training. All forms of participant training are available under this mode: short-term specialized; long-term academic; U.S., third-country, and in-country; and regional seminars or workshops. Specially designed pilot training projects are sometimes included to test new approaches, systems, and ideas.

4.3.2 Mode 9: Developing Country-Focused

Purpose. The purpose of these projects is to strengthen host government institutional capabilities to respond to priority development problems and issues in science and technology. (The difference between this and the U.S.-focused mode is that no initial research and development period is required in Mode 9.)

Type of Project. These projects are field oriented from the outset; that is, they strive for more U.S. grantees or contractors working in developing countries on science and technology issues, more training in established training programs, and more host government involvement.

Type of Training. All forms of participant training are provided under this mode.

Strengths (of Modes 8 and 9). Perhaps the most valuable characteristic of training under these modes is that it can be obtained in no other way; pilot training programs often are developed as prototypes in specialized or technical areas (e.g., energy management, low-cost communications, employment generation through small industry stimulation, and environmental control).

Another major strength is that the training courses are centrally funded so Missions or host countries are able to sponsor participants either free of cost or by providing them with international travel or, possibly, living costs only.

These modes encourage the development of professional linkages between U.S. and developing country institutions that can be sustained and nurtured long after the centrally funded project is completed.

Weaknesses. A major weakness of centrally funded training from the Mission perspective is the informality with which training opportunities come to the attention of Mission officers: sometimes by circular messages, other times from inquiries by host country officials who have been contacted directly by AID/Washington or have learned of the training programs through other sources.

5. CENTRAL ISSUES: GENERAL FINDINGS

In addition to the strengths and weaknesses associated with the training modes described above, there are several constraints and issues reflected in the evaluation literature that transcend any particular mode. Listed in order of frequency of concern, the most notable issues include the following:

    1. English language ability
    2. Availability of candidates for training
    3. Utilization of training (evaluation and followup)
    4. Return and retention of participants
    5. Participation by women
    6. Selection criteria and procedures
    7. Participant placement
    8. Third-country versus U.S. training
    9. Program extensions and successive degrees
  10. Degree equivalency

5.1 English Language Ability

Lack of adequate English language proficiency is a major constraint to host governments and Missions in selecting qualified candidates for participant training. The problem is particularly acute in countries where English is not the second language, e.g., Francophone and Lusophone countries. AID has made considerable investments in in-country, regional, and U.S. English language programs to assist candidates in achieving adequate language proficiency. The best approach for meeting this need should be decided on a country or project basis. It was pointed out in several evaluations that flexibility in offering English language training in the United States or in-country is important; in-country centers may not be accessible to everyone and may not provide an equitable distribution of training opportunities.

5.2 Availability of Candidates

Many project evaluations mention the continuing problem of inadequate numbers of qualified candidates. Candidates available for training at the time of project implementation frequently fall short of the numbers proposed in the Project Paper. This suggests that either the design was unrealistic or conditions had changed between the design and implementation phases. Among the reasons cited were basic shortages of qualified and appropriate candidates, lack of English language skills, heavy workloads making the release of candidates difficult, and competition with other donor training programs. Many evaluations noted that the difficulty of selecting enough qualified candidates caused delays in the training schedule. This, in turn, disrupted other elements of the project schedule; because counterparts did not return in time, U.S. technicians were left to work on their own. Mission personnel should remain sensitive to this pervasive problem and ensure that project designers make a realistic assessment of available candidates when projecting training requirements.

5.3 Utilization of Training

Host government systems for ensuring the appropriate place-
ment of returned participants, as well as followup and evaluation
procedures for determining how training is being utilized, were
generally weak in most of the projects reviewed, even when such
systems were built into the project. It also was suggested in
several evaluations that returned participants in academia, the
private sector, and public companies might have more opportuni-
ties to apply their training than participants in government ser-
vice, because of financial, bureaucratic, and political con-
straints.

5.4 Return and Retention of Participants

Many project evaluations cited poor return rates and reten-
tion of returned participants in sponsoring institutions. They
suggested several reasons: salaries that were noncompetitive
compared with those of other host government agencies or the pri-
vate sector, lack of institutional interest in or support for
returned participants' ideas and newly acquired knowledge, better
opportunities abroad or in other fields or institutions at home,
and poor socioeconomic and political conditions in the host
country. Some of the evaluations suggest that lateral transfers
to other ministries or agencies should be resisted and combatted
with competitive remunerations.

5.5 Participation by Women

Project evaluations reflected a low rate of participation in
training by women. This was attributed, in part, to family obli-
gations and cultural restrictions and to the narrow specializa-
tion of study in disciplines not traditionally pursued by women.
It was noted that the participation of women is a function of
level and field of study: the more "grassroots" the level of
training, the higher their participation. It was suggested that
more in-country training and third-country undergraduate training
be used as a way to increase the numbers of women studying in
AID-designated fields.

5.6 Selection Criteria and Procedures

Many projects lacked systematic selection procedures or standard criteria. Distribution of training opportunities tends to be uneven when there is no systematic coordination by the host government. Also, selection based only on recommendations by superiors and not on student-initiated applications may exclude highly qualified and motivated candidates from consideration. It was suggested that establishment of a national training plan could help to define selection criteria, and a training committee with wide administrative and technical representation could assist in developing orderly procedures. Lacking such a national system, project design could specify criteria, and general training projects could incorporate provisions for assisting the host government to develop a national training plan and to identify training priorities.

5.7 Participant Placement

Lack of sufficient lead time for placing participants may result in their placement at inappropriate institutions. Also, delays in processing documents by host government officials, U.S. institutions, and in AID/Washington may mean that participants are given insufficient advance notice to adequately prepare for departure. More complete screening could reduce the processing time in the United States. Inappropriate placement may also arise because of informal links between a contractor and particular universities that may bias placement. Such contractor bias denies participants from the affected sector or host government institution the diversification and breadth of experience that should be available to them.

5.8 Third-Country Versus U.S. Training

Although the quality and appropriateness of U.S. training were often noted positively in evaluations, U.S. methodology and technologies do not always correspond to developing country needs (e.g., repair of certain types of equipment no longer commonly used in the United States, or different ecological conditions). Short-term U.S. training needs to be tailored specifically to the needs and requirements of the developing country involved.

Third-country training was often considered more appropriate than U.S. training because socioeconomic conditions are often similar to those in the host country and the programs are more cost effective. However, a number of problems constrain the use of third-country training: language barriers, political sen-

sitivities, limited space, lack of mechanisms for managing training outside the host country or the United States, and lack of information on training opportunities. Institutional capability was also noted as a potential constraint to the use of this alternative to U.S. training; for example, African institutions may have funding, physical infrastructure, library and research facility, and teaching staff constraints.

5.9 Program Extensions and Successive Degrees

This was a common problem in many of the projects, especially for graduate training. Reasons given included poor selection (inadequate English language proficiency and weak academic backgrounds requiring additional courses); the need for additional coursework to resolve degree equivalency issues; and university personnel encouragement of participants to pursue additional degrees. These program extensions may cause cost overruns if participants are not fully funded from the outset rather than annually. Extensions may also be common for highly motivated participants in nondegree academic training who may become frustrated and seek ways to extend their stay to obtain a degree.

5.10 Degree Equivalency

Although efforts have been undertaken to resolve disputes concerning degree equivalency, participants trained in the United States may encounter difficulties in introducing changes or new ideas in their host institutions because of misconceptions about U.S. degrees. U.S. training also may be seen to present the threat of potential methodological, political, or cultural conflict. Where equivalency is not established, U.S. training might not lead to increased earnings or promotion prospects, which may discourage candidates. The degree equivalency issue should be examined carefully on a country basis before participants depart for training.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Perhaps the most evident conclusion to be drawn from this study is a recognition of the difficulty of assessing the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches to participant training based on available evaluation documents. Project assessments such as PARs and PESs are essentially project monitoring devices and cannot be expected to effectively measure the cost-benefit and long-term impacts of participant training in the particular project context. Rather, such documents might shed

light on "process" or implementation issues that need attention as the project unfolds, such as shortages of qualified candidates, inadequate English language skills, improper participant placement or monitoring, and the like.

PARs and PESs do not really provide much insight into the relative strengths and weaknesses of a particular training mode and the circumstances that promote better performance. The "N" (negative) and "P" (positive) rating applied in the earlier PARs was not very informative, nor does the current numerical rating system for measuring satisfaction on a scale of 1 to 5 provide much insight or useful information to personnel responsible for designing or managing participant training. Although the PES narrative section provides an opportunity for useful comment, more often than not no comments are made or the discussion is very superficial.

At the least, evaluations should contain uniform data elements that can be aggregated for analytical purposes. As mentioned at the beginning of this report, it was anticipated that sufficient data would be found to permit some conclusions to be drawn concerning the most effective ways to undertake participant training under the various modes identified. For example, if a Mission is interested in designing a general training project, does past experience suggest that it would be more effective for the Mission to do it directly or to hire a contractor to manage the project? Does past experience indicate whether training should be academic or technical, short-term or long-term, regional or bilateral? Should training be carried out in the United States or in third countries? Which are the most cost-effective modes?

Although many individual PESs, PARs, and other evaluative documents shed some light on these issues, not enough data were presented in a uniform manner to enable meaningful analysis, nor was sufficient evidence available to determine whether some modes perform better than others. This suggests that some improvements could be made in project evaluation instruments in their treatment of training, especially in view of the current expansion of the participant training program.

Despite the limitations imposed by the data, it is hoped that the identification, categorization, and description of the various approaches to training contained in this report will be of value to Mission and other project personnel responsible for planning participant training programs and designing and managing individual training projects. Although it can be argued that training in general is a positive force, evidence of the benefits to be obtained from AID's investment in its training program appears to be lacking. The following recommendations are suggested as possible steps to take in improving the evaluation of participant training:

1. Existing project evaluation guidelines should be reviewed for the purpose of developing a more useful system or tool for assessing the participant training element on a continuing basis.

2. To permit a fuller understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of various training modes and a determination of which mode performs better under what circumstances, a field study could be carried out in one or more countries with a large training portfolio. The field study could include an analysis of such issues as contractor versus Mission-managed training, regional versus bilateral arrangements, short-term versus long-term training, and U.S. versus third-country training.